

THE  
ART  
REVIEW

GLASGOW GALLERY & MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION



# GLASGOW ART GALLERY AND MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

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The cultivation and advancement of interest in the various activities, artistic, educational and scientific, promoted by the Art Gallery and Museums of the Corporation of the City of Glasgow.

## ACTIVITIES.

Bi-Monthly Calendar of Events; Quarterly Art and Museum Journal; Exhibitions; Lectures; Discussions; Music, etc.

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### Picture on Cover.

"GIRL WITH AUBURN HAIR," by RENOIR.

*From the Burrell Collection*

*Pastel, 20½ × 16½ ins.*

PIERRE AUGUSTE RENOIR (1841-1919) began his art career as a painter of porcelain and fans, for which he copied the work of Watteau, Boucher and Lancret. Like Cézanne he was, for a time, associated with the Impressionists. Ultimately he developed an original conception of the feminine, discarding the sentimentality to be found in many of his predecessors.

# THE ART REVIEW

GLASGOW GALLERY & MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

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## Editorial

THIS is the second issue of the Glasgow Art Gallery and Museums Association Review. If it meets with the same cordial welcome, which was extended to the first, the hope of finding it established on a firm basis will be fulfilled.

We do not propose to enlarge upon the commendations received—many of them from totally unexpected sources—because we are convinced that in due course, improvements in style, presentation and content will all speak for themselves. We are, however, very conscious of how much we owe to many people—our contributors for adapting themselves to our requirements, our advertisers for permitting philanthropy to displace business acumen (maybe it was foresight!), our printers for their forbearance and a fine job of work, and the general public for their interest and goodwill.

Of course, we had our critics, and we shall take full advantage of their counsel. But it seems necessary to repeat that we are not primarily concerned with polemics. That does not mean controversy has no attractions for us, but it does mean that we have no space for it and, until regular and frequent publication is achieved we do not believe any argument can be kept hot enough to sustain coherence and value. It seems, therefore, a wise procedure to continue in the mood of reflection until the accumulating evidence produces a full authority for the conviction that we know what we are talking about.

From time to time we shall attempt to bring forward into the light of contemporary thought and comment several of Glasgow's treasures which appear to have eluded scholars and historians. But, for several issues to come, the Burrell Collection, with its extraordinary range of interest, will be the chief source of material.

## RAEBURN —A MASTER CRAFTSMAN

WHAT is the particular significance of Raeburn as a painter? To answer that question we must, perhaps, think of conditions in the last quarter of the eighteenth century when Raeburn taught himself to paint, for Raeburn was a self-taught artist. David Martin gave him some assistance, and pictures to copy, but Raeburn was in no sense a pupil of Martin's. Although the Trustees' Academy had opened in Edinburgh in 1760 under Delacour, and Alexander Runciman was appointed in 1772 and continued as Master until 1785, Raeburn did not attend the Trustees' Academy. The earliest known work by Raeburn is the miniature of David Deuchar painted in 1773; the first picture in oil, the full-length, seated portrait of George Chalmers of Pittencrieff, was painted in 1776; in 1785 he departed on his two years' visit to Rome; by that time he had developed a completely personal style and was a rising portrait painter in his native city. So it may be said that Raeburn evolved his own technical method during the very period of Runciman's reign as Master of the local School of Art—and should we feel that way, we may shudder to think what might have happened had Raeburn been a dutiful pupil and enjoyed the benefits of the art education he might so readily have had—and which Runciman, no doubt, believed he was fully qualified to provide.

Just what was peculiar or personal in Raeburn's method? Since he had no professional training in the accepted technical methods of the time he had to evolve his own, and Runciman—if we may use Runciman as typifying the fully-trained professional of the age—no doubt regarded him as a blundering ignoramus trying to run before he could walk. In the painting of eighteenth century pictures there was a formidable background of professionalism. Rome was the fountainhead, Homer and Virgil the source of inspiration (Runciman adopted the Scot-

STANLEY CURSITER, O.B.E., R.S.A.,  
R.S.W., Director, National Galleries of  
Scotland

tish equivalent—Ossian). In portrait painting it was considered desirable that the subject should be depicted in a suitable manner and vested with all due importance. Chiaroscuro was an elaborate science. In the mere matter of procedure the picture started with an underpainting in a monochrome to which colour was added later in glazes and scumbles. This underpainting, known as the 'dead colour', was regarded as an indispensable preliminary, and each Master had his assured recipe for success. Allan Ramsay, on his return from Rome, began his pictures with an underpainting of red. This he hatched and cross-hatched with a small brush until he had a complete rendering of his picture in monochrome, but, as Vertue says, when this had been painted over four, five or six times, little of the red is seen. Later he used a cooler underpainting. Reynolds modelled his heads completely in a good heavy impasto of grey, as may be seen in the unfinished sketch of Burke in the Scottish National Gallery. Other painters used other colours, some used umber, and later, bitumen, with the well-known disastrous results. Raeburn threw all that overboard—he had escaped being taught that these things were necessary. His method was to paint as directly as he could, to waste no time on two coats of paint where one would do, or on two brush strokes where one was enough.

A sitter has described his method of work. 'He spoke a few words to me in his usual brief and kindly way—evidently to put me into an agreeable mood; and having placed me in a chair on a platform at the end of his painting-room, in the posture required, set up his easel beside me with the canvas ready to receive the colour. When he saw all was right, he took his palette and his brush, retreated back step by step, with his face towards me, till he was nigh the other end of the room; he stood and studied for a minute more, then came up to the canvas, and, without looking



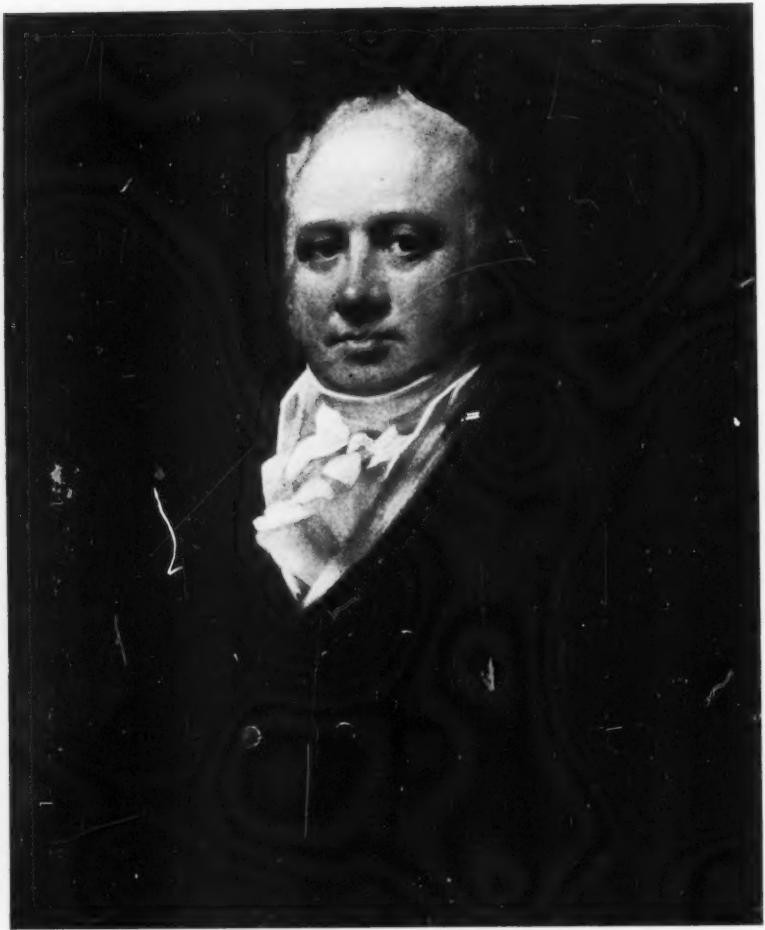
SIR HENRY RAEURN, R.A.

PORTRAIT OF MRS. WILLIAM URQUHART  
*Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 ins.*

at me, wrought upon it with colour for some time. Having done this, he retreated in the same manner, studied my looks at that distance for about another minute, then came hastily up to the canvas and painted a few minutes more.' The sitter then says that he had sat to other artists, and their method had been very different; they drew his head in chalk and measured the drawing with compasses, then sat close to him peering into his face, filling in the outline they had drawn. Raeburn's pictures look normal enough now, but in their day they were revolutionary. Matisse, in our day, has thrown over light

and shade; Raeburn threw over 'under-painting'—it was almost as startling an innovation.

While Matisse has rejected light and shade, Raeburn may be said to have spent his life pursuing it. It is by light that we are conscious of visual effect, and, in Raeburn's day, the art of portraiture had, as its aim representation in terms of the visual image from a single viewpoint for any one picture (*pace* Picasso!). It is by light that we are conscious of form, and Raeburn's problem was so to use light that form received its fullest revelation. If we consider a head as the painter sees



SIR HENRY RAEURN, R.A.

PORTRAIT OF WILLIAM JAMIESON, JUNR.

*Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 ins.*

it—a spheroid with knobs—it is the peculiar and distinctive quality of the knobs that gives the head its personal and individual character. Placed in the proper light these knobs will be given their greatest value; too much shadow will obscure them; too little will lead to an understatement of their projection. There is more in portrait painting than merely rendering the planes and surface projections of a head, although, God knows, that is task enough and too much for most painters. The features in their relation to each other and the subtle inflections of 'expression', as we call it, due to the tiny

strains and stresses in the underlying muscles, where they may raise an eyebrow or distend a nostril, or fix the glint of an eye, go beyond the limits of observed fact and call for some psychic sympathy which we may not fully understand but which lies in the power of great portrait painters. These are matters of a different order—let us leave them and think only of the simpler but no less important aspect of the head as a three-dimensional shape occupying space. Go into a Gallery with a portrait by Raeburn—look at it as a representation of shape—and see if any other picture in the room can stand comparison.



SIR HENRY RAEURN, R.A.

PORTRAIT OF MRS. ANNE CAMPBELL.  
*Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 ins.*

The portrait of William Jamieson, Junr. (illustrated) is an excellent example for this purpose; note how the nose projects; how the eyes are under their eye-lids and in their sockets under the eyebrows; look at the projection of the lower lip and how the head sits down in the neck-cloth. We feel that the ears are round on the side of the head even if they do not show; we are conscious of the sculpturesque quality of the head. How is it done? Just by sheer intelligence in the use of light.

Let us enjoy another thrill in the recognition of rare craftsmanship—follow the out-

line of the head against the background—note the constantly varying quality of the edge, dark against light where the chin comes against the neck-cloth, then light against dark all round the head, but with an edge that is like a lovely melody. Look at a few other portraits and see how other artists manage their edges. Edges are a test!

What then does Raeburn stand for? Is he merely the 'vulgar virtuoso' that Roger Fry called him? Is he only a superb craftsman exploiting his technical accomplishment? We think not. He was a superb craftsman, but he never used his craftsmanship ostenta-

## THE BURRELL COLLECTION SILVER

By the time this article appears we shall have brought into Glasgow some more items of outstanding importance. These will be described in a subsequent article, for they include examples unique in any museum.

THERE is a tendency to believe that because a piece of silver is old, elaborate and of high bullion value it must be a choice work of art, but a great deal of the work of vaunted South German and Italian goldsmiths is in execrable taste —none more so than the achievements Cellini himself boasts of in his *Memoirs*. The keynote of the Burrell Collection is purity of design.

Its mainstay is the group of English silver, together with some Scottish, of the late seventeenth century. Work of this period has benefited by the functional trend of the Commonwealth, when ornament was looked on with suspicion. The well-known lidded tankards, with their massive S-shaped handles, are good examples. Most belong to the time of Charles II, and the most interesting in the group has the London date-letter for 1669-70. It is small and plain, but of beautiful proportions, and the foot has an inscription which is a little odd for such a



(a) SILVER CUP BY GEORGE TITTERTON  
(b) SMALL BOWL  
(c) CUP

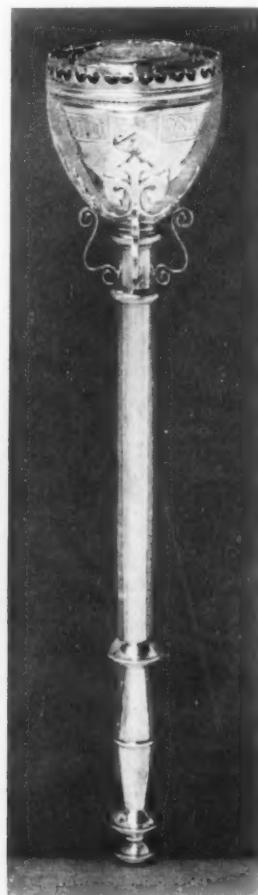
LONDON, 1700-1  
LONDON, 1656-7  
UNMARKED, last quarter of 17th century

IAN FINLAY  
Royal Scottish Museum

vessel: *The Gift of Mary Smith to Mary Jones*. To me more attractive still, however, is the series of little dishes and vessels so typical of the time, in thin metal beaten out into simple shapes and ornamented largely with engraving of that impressionist sort which is such a delightful feature. There is the little strawberry dish by Joseph Walker of Dublin, 1696-7, with a spirited, punched design of stylized flowers around a boss. A tiny bowl, similarly punched but with an oak-leaf pattern, has the London mark for 1656-7, so that it actually comes within the Commonwealth period. A large beaker of Dutch type,

MAZE WITH THE ARMS  
OF THE BLACKSMITHS'  
COMPANY

(sable, a chevron or between  
three hammers argent  
handled of the second,  
dually crowned of the last)





BEAKER WITH *Chinoiserie* DECORATION

LONDON, 1692-3

made in London in 1692-3, has a delicate but effective band of *chinoiserie* birds among branches, characteristic of the prevailing fashion for things Chinese. This Dutch type of beaker is of special interest to Scots, as it was adopted by many churches in and around Aberdeenshire for their Communion cups.

The most ambitious piece of this period is the mace, which has aroused some speculation. It is very simple, for a mace. It is engraved with the motto of the London Company of Blacksmiths, *By Hammer and Hand all Arts doe Stand*; and the arms of the Company appear also. On top are the arms of Charles II, or the royal arms of the Stuarts with 'C.R.', which in this case must be read as Charles II. There is no date-letter or maker's mark. Speculation arises from the fact that there seems to be no record of the Company ever having used a mace. Accord-

ing to an entry in the Minutes and Accounts for October 19th, 1659:

'It is this day ordered that a Brasill Staffe with a Silver Head for the Beadle to goe with before the Company shall be made, and it is left with the Wardens to get the same done.'

But the staff-head is in the Guildhall Museum. The Company's plate was sold in 1642; and when money was borrowed in 1666, after the Great Fire, it may have been on the security of plate; while all the silver was sold in 1783 to secure funds for pensions. So there have been many dispersals, and the mace may have gone on its travels after any of them.



HANAP, PARCEL-GILT

SOUTH GERMAN

*Late 15th or early 16th century, height 10 ins.*



CHALICE OF SILVER-GILT

ENGLISH  
About 1420, height 6½ ins.

Attention will centre on a striking South German hanap, of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. It is parcel-gilt, and in three sections. The base rests on three feet in the shape of towers, each complete with machicolations and portcullis and garrisoned with armed men. One of the warriors is a cross-bowman. A comical feature is that in two cases the portcullis has descended and pinned men to the ground, while in the third tower a pair of legs is disappearing inside just in time. On the cover is a turreted castle. There are no marks, but the base is inscribed: *Iohannes Rollen Decanus et Doctor me fieri iussit.*

Among earlier pieces is a rather curious mazer-bowl which, judging by the rim, is of the late fifteenth century. The odd feature is the depth of the bowl, as mazers are normally shallow. Its most interesting point is the 'print'—the boss or medallion set in the foot of the bowl—in red and green *champlevé* enamel. This has been assigned to the thirteenth century. Mazers were common drinking vessels in the Middle Ages. The name seems to be derived from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning spotted, in reference to the maple-wood of which the bowls were

almost invariably made. The derivation is the same as that of measles.

Of the Elizabethan pieces, the finest are a group of three silver-mounted 'tiger-ware' jugs, the earliest of which has the London mark for 1564-5. These jugs are typical. The Elizabethans had a great regard for curiosities from the Orient, and they mounted in silver not only coconuts and ostrich-shells—there is a coconut cup in the collection—but also some rare examples of Chinese porcelain which found their way to Europe. None of those things, however, is quite so pleasing as the mounting of their own native, mottled stoneware jugs, the plainness of which offsets the rich engraving of the mounts. There are also two interesting Communion cups of Elizabeth's reign. Both are London made, the earlier in 1564-5. The strapwork ornament



SILVER PYX

ENGRAVED THUS: *M. Torner Me Fecit*  
SOUTH GERMAN, late 16th century



GROUP OF TWELVE MINIATURE UTENSILS: TEN PIECES MADE BY MATTHEW MADDEN AND ONE EACH BY JAMES GOODWIN AND JOHN CLIFTON  
*Early 18th Century*

engraved on them is a common feature of late Tudor decoration.

The eighteenth-century pieces in the collection are many, but they are every bit as choice as the earlier pieces, which is saying a good deal for a period subject to whimsical tastes in the domestic arts. Just within the century and no more is the functional ink-stand by William Lukin, of London, innocent of ornament except for the tiny, clawed feet. Queen Anne's reign is much maligned for dullness, whereas in fact the taste shown by both silversmiths and furniture-makers then was much purer and—to our eyes, at least—more pleasing than the extravagances and conceits of the frequently too-clever craftsmen of the next half-century. The introduction of tea and coffee drinking, widely condemned at the time, produced a wonderful range of table silver, notably the tea-pots, coffee-pots and hot-water pots, far more beautiful than anything made for the same purpose since. The Burrell Collection has some good examples. But the quaintest of all its early eighteenth-century material is the group of a dozen miniature utensils, to delight the owners of dolls' houses. Most of them are the work of Matthew Madden. There is, for example, the typical flat-topped tankard made in 1701-2, only one and three-

quarter inches high. There is a candle-snuffer with tray, of 1706. A Monteith-bowl of the same year imitates the general features of the great punch-bowls of this type, which had removable rims scalloped to take the stems of wine-glasses placed so as to cool in the water. Three sugar-sifters show the 'bayonet-catch' to secure the top, a feature which appeared late in the previous century. The *pièce-de-résistance* is a minute kettle on a stand, made by James Goodwin in the year of the attempt on the throne by the Old Pretender.



PLAIN SILVER INKSTAND, BY WILLIAM LUKIN  
LONDON  
1699-1700, length almost 7 ins.

## SOME SCOTTISH ETCHERS

**S**COTLAND has good reason to be proud of her contribution to the Art of Etching. There exists, I believe, no book on the history of Scottish engraving; but the subject is well worth while. There were in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries numerous engravers of Scottish nationality at work upon elaborate reproductions of paintings or other prints for illustration of books, or to be sold as single-sheets. These men were highly accomplished, yet content, like all their kind, to reproduce in amazing meshes of line, the designs of others. Among them were Sir Robert Strange, the Orcadian whom George III knighted; and Robert Scott who engraved in an attic within sight of St. Giles', Edinburgh, and was the father of David and William Bell Scott.

In addition to these laborious professionals, and more interesting to posterity, were the amateurs, either gentlemen who pursued the Art for pleasure (like John Clerk of Eldin or Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe), or painters who turned to the medium to make reproductions of original designs. Among the latter were the Runcimans, and 'the Nasmyths, and David Allan, known through his satirical inventions as 'the Scotch Hogarth'. These men etched, and one of them, Clerk of Eldin, etched uncommonly well. Nor should we pass to more important artists without at least mentioning one quaint, beloved figure, industrious John Kay, the Dalkeith barber, who made the great portrait gallery of Scots worthies and eccentrics.

But the Scots etchers who really 'matter' were 'painter-etchers', a term in current use to describe artists (most of them are painters) who work out upon the copper-plate their own original designs. In this field, Rembrandt in etching and Dürer in line-engraving, are the supreme exemplars. Rembrandt was the inspiration of Wilkie and Geddes, pioneer painter-etchers in the first half of the nineteenth century. When these friends made their prints, there was, as yet, no commercial aspect to original engraving. Wilkie and

DOUGLAS PERCY BLISS, M.A.  
Director, Glasgow School of Art

Geddes etched and dry-pointed as a hobby, and with no thought of profit.

Sir David Wilkie, R.A. (1785-1841), was the most successful (if not the greatest) painter of his day. Naturally, everything that such a man touched, was of interest to his contemporaries. The historic importance of his plates, fourteen in number, is consequently somewhat disproportionate to their intrinsic value. As an etcher, indeed, Wilkie is not so illustrious as his fellow-Scot, Andrew Geddes; yet his finest print, 'The Lost Receipt' (sometimes called 'Man at Bureau') is of great interest. Wilkie's best-known etching is 'The Cellini' or 'Pope and the Jeweller', in which he used drypoint skilfully to get engraver's 'colour'. 'The Cellini' and 'Reading the Will', were etched versions of paintings of the subject.

Andrew Geddes, A.R.A. (1783-1844), made forty plates. It has been said of him that his portraits anticipated those of Whistler, his landscapes those of Legros and Haden, and his drypoints those of Bone. This is a great claim and thoroughly justified. Geddes was constantly experimenting. The famous plate of the 'Artist's Mother' is evidence of his pre-occupation with technique. A simple linear statement was not enough for Geddes. In his search for quality of colour and texture, he used in this plate etching, drypoint, mezzotint and perhaps even graver-work. This is one of the masterpieces of modern etching.

The Aberdonian, William Dyce, R.A. (1806-64), also elected to live and work furth of Scotland. Highly educated and widely travelled, Dyce distinguished himself not only as an artist, but as organiser of the Schools of Design in the middle of the century. When he turned to etching it was from Rembrandt that he found inspiration and not from the empty, fluent, outline methods of the Flaxman-Lasinio kind, still much in vogue. His etchings, particularly 'Old Woman' and 'Young Angler', have a nervous quality of line, a freedom and



SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A.

THE LOST RECEIPT  
*Drypoint*

warmth of handling that no one could have expected from his correct academic paintings.

Wilkie, Geddes and Dyce had shown the way, but no one was ready to follow their lead. In the 'sixties', however, came the Whistler-Seymour Haden 'revival' and in 1880 the foundation of the Society of Painter-Etchers. The whole economic situation had changed by the time that Strang, D. Y. Cameron, Bone and the other Scots began to make their names. Original prints were now selling well. The painter-etcher could make money, even much money, if his work appealed to the new and ever-increasing number of print-collectors. The dealers were very active, advancing reputations, pushing up prices etc., and there was much grave jargon about 'states'. Collectors, moreover, were excited by the belief that prints meant not only pleasure but profit, for prices kept rising. Editions were small and prices were big in the years when Cameron's was the most respected name in the print-trade, and prices reached fantastic heights in the boom years, immediately after the last great war, when every collector's ambition was to own a McBey.

There is room here only for a few words about each of these men. William Strang,

R.A. (1859-1921), had a masculine squareness in his work and in his outlook by which he stood out at a time when a rather flimsy Impressionist aesthetic was fashionable. Strang built upon his master, Legros, rather than upon Whistler. He did not deal in hints and nuances. He made clear, bold, linear statements. Perhaps his portrait-etchings are the most important of his prints, but he also used the graver with distinction.

Sir D. Y. Cameron, R.A. (1865-1945), was immensely prolific. He too turned from the idol of the moment, Whistler, and found his inspiration in Méryon. A superb technician, equally successful in landscape and architecture, Cameron was perhaps his happiest when portraying the mountains of his homeland. Among many honours he enjoyed one that was unique. He was twice elected to the Associateship of the Royal



ANDREW GEDDES, A.R.A.

THE ARTIST'S MOTHER  
*Drypoint*



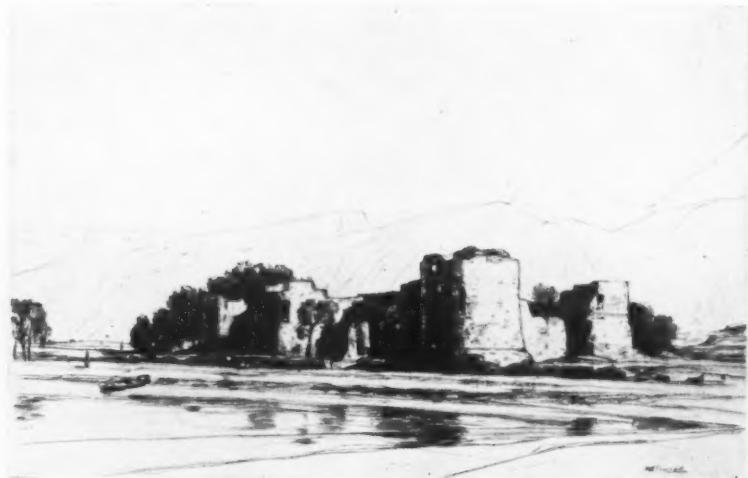
SIR MUIRHEAD BONE, LL.D., D.LITT.

THE TREVI FOUNTAIN  
*Drypoint*

Academy, first as Engraver, and later as Painter. Cameron had an instinct for spacing. He knew exactly where to place his masses and poise his accents. He had the architectonic sense in eminent degree.

Sir Muirhead Bone, a Glaswegian, is the acknowledged great master of drypointing. No one before or since has exploited with such power the potentialities of the medium for rendering varied textures and deep, velvety gloom. Magistral is the only word which fitly describes his productions. In certain fields of draughtsmanship, topographical and architectural, he has extended the range of artistic achievement.

To Cameron and Bone there was later added a third, younger, but likewise Scottish. This was James McBey and the trio—not that the men were personal associates—was known in the Print world as the 'big three'. McBey, an Aberdonian, aroused extraordinary excitement with etchings and dry-points, characterised by unerring design, a minimum of nervous handling, yet amazing suggestion of light and atmosphere. McBey, too, was a wizard in his own way. Not with-



SIR D. Y. CAMERON, R.A., R.S.A., LL.D.

INVERLOCHY  
*Drypoint*

out reason did the historian of etching remark, 'It is curious how often regenerating influences in etching have come from Scotland.'

The artists so briefly dismissed, and of course many others, can all be studied in the Print Room at Kelvingrove Art Gallery. Here is a little Paradise for the print lover. But, if you wish to get the fullest pleasure that the study of prints can offer, you should try and get to know a little about the processes. The amateur of prints should see for himself the tackle of the trade. He should try and witness demonstrations, handle the plates, examine the tools, master the essential differences between Drypoint, Etching, Aquatint, Line-Engraving, etc. It is not difficult. Much can be done with the aid of books. Of these books, one can be recommended with confidence, 'The Art of Etching' by E. S. Lumsden, R.S.A. Had I the space to follow further this brief note on Scottish etching, Lumsden and the young men he has inspired would demand our attention.



WILLIAM STRANG, R.A., R.S.A., LL.D. THOMAS HARDY, O.M.  
*Engraving*



JAMES McBEEY, LL.D.

THE SURRENDER OF JERUSALEM  
*Etching*

## AFRICAN MASKS AND SCULPTURE

THE average visitor to the Ethnographical Section of a museum passes through the room merely glancing at the many objects on view and only hesitating to examine in more detail those objects which are familiar or bear a resemblance to things within his own sphere of life. The many and varied types of masks are mentally noted as something to do with Witch Doctors but in reality the study of masks and the interest obtained therefrom is much deeper. The effect of a mask on the human mind, especially that of primitive people, can never be truly understood seeing it in a museum case or even by handling it. To realise the full significance it is essential to see a mask in its true environment. The weird and grotesque masks of the natives of Africa can conjure up the deepest feelings of ecstasy and fear when seen in the mysterious light of the forest and worn by bodies with an extraordinary wealth of natural movement. The inherent belief in spirits brings to the mind of primitive people the idea of reality of the object portrayed by the superimposition of a mask on the human form.

Most of the masks displayed in the Glasgow Museum belong to the native tribes of West Africa. As will be seen from the wall map in the Ethnographical Room these people belong to the higher group of primitive society. The area they occupy is shown in blue and the objects related to them are displayed in cases with a blue background. Several masks, wooden figures and stools are to be seen in these cases but a further collection of African masks, some of which are illustrated here, is displayed under the heading Magic and Music in the corridor connecting the Ethnographical and Ornithological galleries.

Leo Frobenius working, more than a century ago, on the distribution and origin of African masks showed that there were two probable centres of origin; one in the south-east and the other in the delta area of the river Niger (Calabar). Frobenius believed

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Ethnology

that the first centre spread its influence in a north-west direction as far as the Niger while the second, also spreading in a north-west direction, penetrated as far as Sene-gambia. Later the two influences reverted in a south-easterly direction. Thus among the tribes of West Africa, including the Congo Basin, there are traces of similar design and utilisation of masks.

Masks are one of the main attributes of ceremonies and dances related to religious belief. As a result of this they are found as a primary factor in Secret Societies of West Africa. Masks are also used for warfare and hunting. Whatever the use, however, it is obvious that the wearer wishes to be identified with the character he represents. The mask carved to represent a ram's head (Fig. 1) is a good example of this. It comes from Nigeria where the Yoruba people believe in Shango, the God of Thunder. He is the Hurler of Thunderbolts and the God of the Storm. The people picture him riding a



FIG. 1. MASK

SOUTHERN NIGERIA

## AFRICAN SCULPTURE



(a) CHIEF'S STOOL, BALUBA, BELGIAN CONGO



(b) WOODEN FIGURE, URNA, CONGO

FIG. 2.



(c) WOODEN FIGURE OF WOMAN USING MORTAR AND PESTLE, KESSAI, BELGIAN CONGO



(d) EGBO FETISH, OLD CALABAR, WEST AFRICA

steed which they believe is a ram. Thus Taba Shango, by which name i.e is generally known, is usually represented as a ram. This mask then would be worn by the human representative of Taba Shango at such ceremonies as the festival of worship of this god. The worship of the ram-headed god is invariably accompanied by sacrifices. The priest kills large numbers of rams and feasting lasts over several days in the month of November.

There are many secret societies among the tribes of West Africa. Initiation is one of the major ceremonies of these societies and all kinds of masks are worn at these celebrations. Usually all the participants are masked. It is only during the actual ceremony that the masks are worn and never in everyday life are the natives masked. Each society has its own set of officials and each official wears a special type of mask. For instance the Executioner of a society will wear masks carved in various forms to represent death. Masks representing after-death spirits are worn by those being initiated and this is probably related to the belief that the original person dies and is reborn on initiation.

The membership of these secret societies is divided up into grades which range from the Probationer to the Councillor above which there is only the Head. The number of grades varies from six to ten and the members of the higher grades are entitled among other things to sit upon stools, a right generally preserved for tribal chiefs. A typical chief's stool is seen in Fig. 2a. These stools are usually carved in the form of a human figure, generally the female figure, which supports a tray to form the seat of the stool. Most of the stools are ancient and are jealously guarded by the owners, at whose death they revert to the ownership of the society. At ceremonies these stools are carried by attendants and are always placed on goatskins, for these members of higher grades are not permitted to sit on the ground.

At the slightest excuse the natives perform ceremonial dances and it is in these performances that the most magnificent masks are seen. All masked dances were originally related to religious functions. The mask

represents a spirit or fetish, in fact the mask is in reality a fetish. It is not in itself sacred as an object but because it is filled with the spirit of the fetish; the person wearing a mask loses personality and becomes a living fetish. The putting on and taking off of masks is done in strict privacy for the transformation of an individual from person to spirit or vice-versa must never be witnessed except by a certain few.

Fetishism plays a great part in the lives of the West African natives. The word 'fetish' comes from the Portuguese word 'feitiço' which means amulet, charm or talisman. The Portuguese were the first to visit West Africa and ever since 'fetish' has been applied to all objects held sacred by the natives. The word 'fetishism' stands for their religious beliefs. Just as masks are looked upon as fetishes so are the many carved wooden figures revered by the natives. These figures may be carved to represent a human figure or an animal. The uses of these figures are many and varied. Some are carved at the time of a person's death and it is believed that the soul of the dead person enters the figure before passing into the unknown. This is reminiscent of the small Ushabti figures found in Egyptian tombs. Witch Doctors often use fetish images instead of the fetish bag which contains all kinds of charms. Into the image is put a small piece of every charm. A poor native when in trouble goes to the witch doctor and purchases the specific charm he requires but if rich enough he buys an image which is regarded as having all the powers of the whole bag of tricks of the witch doctor. Sacrifices must be made regularly to the image to keep it up to its full power. Examples of these wooden figures are seen in Figs. 2b, c and d.

In prehistoric art there is, without doubt, a marked difference between that of the Palaeolithic and that of the Neolithic. The Palaeolithic artist portrayed what he saw and what to him was the most important in the maintenance of existence; in cave art a bison was a bison. In the Neolithic period the art is symbolic and is intended to be communicative. Similarly negro art, as related to the making of masks and images,



SIR HENRY RAEURN, R.A.

MR. AND MRS. ROBERT N. CAMPBELL OF KAILZIE

*Oil on canvas, 95 x 60 ins.*



EUGÈNE-LOUIS BOUDIN

LA PLAGE À TROUVILLE; L'IMPÉRATRICE EUGÉNIE ET SA SUITE

*Oil on panel, 14×23 ins.*

EUGÈNE BOUDIN (1824-1898) has acquired international fame as a "marine painter". This has perhaps led to insufficient regard having been paid to his technical achievements. His manipulation of light led Corot to hail him as "the king of the heavens". In some measure, through his influence on Monet, he led the way towards full "impressionism". In the Burrell Collection there are thirteen paintings by Boudin. This picture is a well-known and characteristic example of the "plage" series.

*(From the Burrell Collection)*

Pages 19 & 20 missing  
Coloured plates only  
No text



## 'BUT IT'S NOT A CIMABUE!'

To a very remarkable extent the task of the staff of an art museum is what is called 'explaining things' to audiences that are unfamiliar with them. This is as true of the writers of learned treatises as it is of those who merely write popular articles in bulletins or concoct labels to be placed on objects. It is also true of those who endeavour to teach by word of mouth in study rooms and museum galleries. In a way, it may be said that explanation of sorts, or rather what passes for it, is a principal function of the museum itself as well as of a large part of its staff.

Of all the jokes about artists and collectors that have gained currency in the world the following is doubtless one of the best known:

Conversation overheard in a picture gallery:

'But it's not a Cimabue!'

'How do you know it's not a Cimabue?'

'Because I am always silent in the presence of a Cimabue.'

Today, two or more generations after it was first told, this charmingly silly anecdote still brings its rewarding smile. However, if we stop smiling and think about it, this apparent slice of fatuousness turns out to be really very sensible and serious art criticism.

Its last sentence contains two basic ideas very cleverly disguised. The word 'always' indicates the idea that the only, and therefore the best, way for anyone to gain acquaintance with a work of art is through looking so often and so hard at it that he acquires an easy and familiar acquaintance with it. The word 'silent' indicates the idea that no one can convey by words any conception of the unique and peculiar qualities that make a work of art either the work of a particular artist or a masterpiece. While many things about an object can be explained or adequately stated in words, as for example that it was made by A for B for use in a certain way at a certain time, the essential things about it as art can only be learned or known

WILLIAM M. IVINS, JR.  
Curator of Prints  
Metropolitan Museum of Art



HONORÉ DAUMIER

L'AMATEUR D'ESTAMPES  
*Oil on canvas, 15 x 10½ ins.*  
*Burrell Collection*

through first-hand sensuous experience of it and cannot be phrased in words—which is to say that they cannot be explained. To many people, as one has learned from sad experience, this seems just so much twaddle. If the insides of atoms can be explained, why surely works of art can be explained!

One interesting difference between atoms and works of art is that men actually see and handle works of art whereas no one has ever seen or touched an atom, much less taken a peek into its insides. The atom and its contents, whatever they may be, exist only by virtue of explanation or inference, for they have been reasoned out, one might even say intellectually created, very largely in an



JAMES MCBEY

THE CRITIC  
*Etching and Drypoint*

endeavour to 'explain' the curious behaviour of measuring instruments, vapour chambers, and photographic negatives when appositely placed in the neighbourhood of very complicated electrical apparatus. If we were honest with ourselves we should recognise that atoms much resemble the ancient Chinese dragon who periodically swallowed the moon and thereby brought about the eclipses—that is to say, they have been invented by men who find it easier to accept many complicated things they can only imagine than a few relatively simple things they can actually touch and see. For some unknown reason the intellectual man has always run away from the concrete facts revealed by his senses and hid his head under a pile of intangible explanatory mechanisms made up out of whole cloth. When the Australian bushman does it on his level, we call it mumbo-jumbo—when we do it on our level, we call it

'Science'. All we really know is that when we do thus and so something happens. The recipe, however, is no more an explanation than is, let us say, baptism or the calling of names.

But to return to works of art, there is no possible explanation of their essential qualities just because there are no such things as second-hand adventures in acquaintance. Only stout Cortez on his peak in Darien sees the Pacific, and not Keats or anyone else who merely reads or listens to descriptions and explanations of it.

Mr. Bernard Berenson once said something like this—if you would understand a work of art you should read and hear little or nothing about it until after you have become thoroughly acquainted with it—and once that has happened any other man's statements about it are statements about himself and not about it.

Needless to say, while there are other purposes that an art museum can have, the aesthetic one is of primary importance. In so far as its purpose is aesthetic the function of an art museum is to enable people to gain such familiar, first-hand acquaintance with works of art that they no longer feel any need to ask for explanations of them. From this point of view a so-called explanation is successful only in so far as it induces people to gain that acquaintance in the only way it can be done, that is, by and for themselves at first hand. Certainly all the verbal explanation in the world is no substitute for that acquaintance. Whenever it is accepted as a substitute it leads only to empty verbalism, parrot talk, which so far from proving that the speaker has any knowledge or taste merely demonstrates that many human beings have an unlucky habit of remembering and trusting to other people's words instead of their own sensuous experiences. All this, probably, is only a gloss on the moral of Hans Christian Andersen's story of the Emperor's New Clothes. In its curious way that story has something to do with 'education'.

(This much abridged article is reproduced by permission of the author, to whom and to the Metropolitan Museum, New York, we are greatly indebted. The illustrations are different from those in the original article and are from our own collection.)

## SOME RECENT ACQUISITIONS



DAVID MARTIN

PORTRAIT OF LORD PROVOST MURDOCH  
*Oil on canvas, 36 x 28 ins.*

DAVID MARTIN. Born Anstruther, 1736. A pupil of Allan Ramsay in London, he studied also at the Drawing Academy in St. Martin's Lane, and paid a short visit to Rome. He was appointed Limner to the Prince of Wales, but in 1775 he settled in Edinburgh. Through David Deuchar, the seal engraver, his young contemporary, Henry Raeburn, secured an introduction to Martin from whom he received hints, and permission to copy certain pictures. Martin was successful also as an engraver, both in mezzotint and in line. Died, 1798.

(For notes on the subject of this and the following portrait, see page 31.)



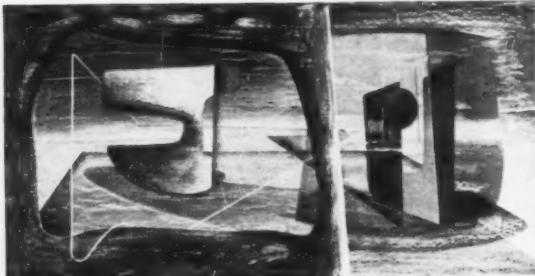
NICOLAS DE LARGILLIÈRE

CLEMENTINA SOBIESKI  
*Oil on canvas, 43 x 31 ins.*

NICOLAS DE LARGILLIÈRE. Born Paris, 1656. His family moved to Antwerp where he was apprenticed to a Flemish landscape and genre painter. At the age of 18 came to England where he became assistant to Lely and painted the drapery in many of his pictures. He returned to Paris about six years later and remained there, painting portraits and still life, except for a visit to England to paint James II and his Queen. His work was greatly influenced by Lely and Van Dyck. Died, 1746.

Research on this picture is in process, and it may be that it is the work of one of the many followers of Largillièr, but it has a quality of its own, and the subject is of special interest.

## SOME RECENT ACQUISITIONS



JOHN TUNNARD

SPECIAL DEVICE  
Oil on board,  $12 \times 25\frac{1}{2}$  ins.



FELIKS TOPOLSKI

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW  
Oil on canvas,  $32 \times 24$  ins.



NICOLAI CIKOVSKY

MANDOLIN AND OLD CORCORAN  
Oil on canvas,  $30 \times 40$  ins.



JOHN COBLEY, R.B.A.

STRING QUARTET  
Oil on canvas,  $38 \times 48$  ins.

JOHN TUNNARD. Born 1900 at Sandy, Bedfordshire. Attended Royal College of Art. Held various posts as designer and art adviser to textile and carpet manufacturers, and teacher of design at Central School, Southampton Row. About 1930 he gave up all commercial work and retired to Cornwall to paint.

In 1932 had an exhibition of representational landscapes, after which he gradually changed over to non-representational work. His one-man shows in London and America have been eminently successful, and he is represented in the most important British and American Galleries.

NICOLAI CIKOVSKY. Born Poland, 1894. Had distinguished career as student and is a multiple prize-winner of several American Institutions. This picture was acquired from the recent goodwill exhibition of American Art brought to this country by Lady Tennyson.

FELIKS TOPOLSKI. Born Poland, 1907. Studied Warsaw, Italy and France. Came to Britain 1935 and rapidly made a name for his brilliant, witty comments on the social scene and has been described as the 'Hogarth of the Blitz'. Recently in Russia as a representative of British War Artists.

JOHN COBLEY, R.B.A. Born Manchester, 1875. Educated at Royal Academy Schools and in Italy. Internationally known and admired for his fine work in lithography examples of which are in all the chief galleries. Married to Ethel Gabain, also distinguished for her achievements in pictorial art. It may be of interest to compare 'String Quartet' with the sculpture, 'Music Group' by Zadkine.

## SOME RECENT ACQUISITIONS



BENNO SCHOTZ, R.S.A.

THE CALL  
Hoptonwood stone, height 20 $\frac{3}{4}$  ins.



CONCETTA SCARAVAGLIONE

YOUNG MOTHER  
Teak, height 30 $\frac{3}{4}$  ins.



OSSIP ZADKINE

THE MUSIC GROUP  
Bronze, height 22 $\frac{1}{4}$  ins.

BENNO SCHOTZ, R.S.A. Born Estonia, 1891. Originally studied Engineering. His career in sculpture has been developed in Glasgow where he is now head of the Department of Sculpture in the School of Art. Much of his carved work is to be seen on Glasgow buildings and he is widely known for his fine portraits in bronze.

CONCETTA SCARAVAGLIONE. Born New York, 1900. Awarded Hon. Mention, Bronze and Silver Medal, National Academy of Design, New York. Widener Gold Medal, 1934. Represented in the Whitney Museum of Modern Art, Roerich Museum, New York, etc. Has done wood carvings for Post Office Buildings, Washington. Instructor in Van Emburgh School of Art, New Jersey. One of four works acquired from the goodwill exhibition of American Art.

OSSIP ZADKINE. Born in Poland, 1890. Now resident in U.S.A. Is looked upon as the creator of cubism in sculpture and as an experimenter with concave surfaces. The 'Music Group' is important in that it contains all the features of his sculpture which have made him so well known in this field.

## SOME RECENT ACQUISITIONS



CHARLES MURRAY

SCOTTISH LOCH  
Water-colour, 16 x 25 ins.

CHARLES MURRAY. Born Aberdeen, 1894. Was for a time on the staff of Glasgow School of Art. Now resident in London. Representative works are in several private and public collections. At one period specialised in etching, but is equally well-known for his paintings in oil and water-colour.



C. R. W. NEVINSON, A.R.A.

MARCH OF CIVILISATION  
Oil on canvas, 28 x 40 ins.

C. R. W. NEVINSON, A.R.A. Born Hampstead, London, 1889. Son of famous war correspondent. Came in contact with interesting people and places through father's contemporaries and extensive travel. Has written on a variety of themes. Especially noted for his war paintings in which he employs a style and technique admirably suited to the subject.



ROBERT EAIDIE, R.S.W.

ST. VINCENT STREET  
Oil on canvas, 28 x 36 ins.

ROBERT EAIDIE, R.S.W. Born 1877. Educated Glasgow, Munich, Paris. Well known figure in Glasgow art circles where his topographical paintings in oil and water-colour are highly appreciated. Has illustrated two volumes on Glasgow and Edinburgh in collaboration with William Power.

## THE NEW HABITAT GROUP



It may be remembered that the Animal Court used to be filled with huge cases containing giraffes, elephants, etc.

These greatly obstructed the view and spoiled a delightful vista from one end of the gallery to the other.

Recollecting some museum methods he had seen abroad, the Director obtained the authority of the Committee to adapt two sides of the animal court as an experiment. Work was commenced, but the 'blitz' called a halt.

Now, the first group has been completed under the general supervision of the Curator, Dr. Absalom.

None of the material used is new, except paint and electric light fittings. The front is made from the old cases. The animals—touched up a bit after their bombing experience

—are taken from these old cases. The museum Taxidermist, Mr. William McLintock, deserves special credit as the finished job is largely his handiwork. The scene painting is the work—done in his spare time—of Mr. William Hollywood Salmon, Chief Artist, Advertising Department, S.C.W.S. We are also obliged to Mr. Wm. Nicol of the Electricity Department, for his co-operation. The jungle grass and vegetation, etc. came from Balloch Park and the Botanic Gardens.

We are very proud of the fact that this habitat group has been created by our own staff, plus Mr. Salmon, from salvaged material, and we hope the public will like it well enough to say 'Go ahead with some more.'

### *African Masks and Sculpture (contd.)*



FIG. 3. DANCING MASK  
BAKITA, KESSAI, BELGIAN CONGO

endeavours to go deeper than the mere portrayal of the model; an attempt is made to communicate the feelings and senses of the person or animal being modelled.

Some figures and masks are very realistic but most are so unrealistic as to be incapable of interpretation by the average European mind. The chief motive of the native in making masks and figures is to communicate, not portray. A very considerable force must be compressed into the masks and emanate from them. In the unearthly light of the forest, especially in moonlight when many of the dances take place, the masks worn by the human representatives of the evil gods or devils must convey the feeling of their being almost sub-human creatures. Often with the human face as a basis on which to work the carver adds animal features in an effort to communicate that the spirit inhabiting the mask has the attributes pertaining to animal life. This may be by enlarging the nose to indicate an abnormal sense of smell or by enlarging the eyes to show an intensity of the sense of vision (Fig. 3). Similarly a human

face may have bird-like eyes or a long beak. Generally the simplest masks are fairly accurate representations of the human or animal form but as they grow larger they become less realistic; human faces are endowed with extra eyes and ears much in the same form as seen in the work of Picasso. In fact the work of Picasso is strongly reminiscent of the methods used in native art.

The designs of masks then are many and varied as are the methods of construction. Some are merely facial covers while others envelop the head and shoulders. They may be of wood, metal or fibre and may be left plain or be highly and fantastically coloured. Brightly coloured beads and shells sewn on a sort of canvas are often used (Fig. 4). To understand the fantastic colouring it must be realised that the natives do not apply colour to imitate the original but rather to obtain by reflected light and shade, under special conditions, the idea which it is intended to impress upon the minds of the natives witnessing the dance or ceremony.

A person who can envisage the mysterious



FIG. 4. MASK OF BEADWORK AND SHELLS.  
KESSAI, BELGIAN CONGO

light of the African forest and simulate the native mind saturated in fetishism will appreciate these masks to the fullest extent. It has been said that to understand Picasso it must be realised that the artist is trying to communicate the sordidness of life under certain conditions. It is difficult, however, for a normal person living in his own small world to visualise this from a grotesque figure painted on canvas. It is possible though by displaying a mask in a setting representative of its natural surroundings to aid the mind to feel the fear and awe which a mask is intended to instil in the native mind. When this is done it may perhaps help towards an understanding of the trend which so much of modern art is taking by attempting to abstract the simple motif in the work of primitive people.

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*Raeburn—A Master Craftsman* (contd.)

tiously or for mere display. If he accomplished a fine piece of direct painting and flicked in a piece of still-life with the minimum number of brush-strokes, is there any reason why he should not have enjoyed—as we do—the fun he had in doing it? He had an amazing pair of eyes with an unrivalled sensibility to tone values. He painted his half-tones and placed both the shadows and the lights on top. This again was an innovation; the practice of the time was to start with the darkest shadows and gradually build up to the brightest lights. Raeburn threw that overboard; but look at the portrait of 'Mrs. Anne Campbell' (illustrated) and see what he did with her hat. In fact, look at any Raeburn picture, and note the way he draws the shadows on the top of the half-tones. Superior people may tell you that it is a matter of no moment how a painter puts on paint. True—the state of an artist's soul is of more importance than the proportion of linseed oil in his medium—but fine craftsmanship is not to be despised. If you can enjoy such simple pleasures as tracing the track of a paint brush over a picture surface, as it leaves behind it a trail of paint, loaded and full, or skinned across with the lightness of a feather, with infinite variety of touch and a wide range of textures—well

—you will find a lot to interest you in the work of Raeburn—more than in most.

Raeburn has one other quality—he fitted his period. He was never the society hack or the hired face painter. His social status as Raeburn of Deanhaugh put him on a level with the people he painted. We feel that he is painting his friends and equals. It is this that gives to his portraits a peculiar intimacy. We are conscious that artist and sitter were on the best of terms. Raeburn's pictures are the result of a collaboration in which there were no reservations. His sitters are at ease and the artist confident. In the double portrait of 'Mr. and Mrs. Robert Campbell of Kailzie' (see reproduction in colour) walking in their garden, we feel that Raeburn himself is included in the group, he walks with them, he too had a garden, Mrs. Campbell links her arm through that of her husband with simple, unaffected candour. If Raeburn is in the party, he is their friend and associate rather than the professional painter brought in to do a job. We have only to contrast this with the work of a portrait painter such as Orpen—a desperately clever painter, with a technique equal to or even more brilliant than that of Raeburn—but how seldom is he 'all square' with his sitter. If his sitter was young and beautiful, how wonderfully Orpen could seize upon that beauty and use it as a vehicle for a scheme of colour or an exercise in double lighting—no one did it better—but the personality of the sitter was apt to be forgotten in the process. Or, if his sitter had some peculiarity, or rubbed Orpen the wrong way, what impish delight he took in bordering on the caricature. One is conscious all the time of a dis-harmony; of the artist at war with his period rather than in love with it; of his tendency to put his sitters in the pillory and make game of them. Raeburn shares with Hals the gift of complete absorption in his period and in the society he painted. He had a rich humanity and understanding of his fellow men and women. The times in which he lived are peopled for us by the record he left in his portraits. They constitute a great gallery of notable pictures. Raeburn, as much as anyone, has told the history of his country.

## HOW TO LOOK AT PICTURES

Two recent books have added to the great number of publications which attempt, more or less successfully, to find answers to the many questions relevant to the problems of art appreciation.

The first of them is a thoroughly revised edition, with four new chapters, of a book which has been in circulation, off and on, for twenty years. Its author, Professor Thomas Bodkin of the Barbour Institute in Birmingham is, in front of a picture, an entertaining and stimulating companion. His knowledge of art history and aesthetic theory is profound, and when one becomes accustomed to the concise and forcible style of his writing, pleasure and profit are precariously balanced.

It appears that Professor Bodkin does not think highly of the philosophic approach. The searchers in this field 'fail absolutely to give us any conception of beauty with which we can usefully appraise pictures'.

The 'analytical', 'technical', 'casual', and approach by 'siege' are all examined and more or less discounted for one reason or another. Then follows a formidable list of notable paintings accompanied by a commentary (packed with biographical data) which we must assume is intended to illustrate Professor Bodkin's approach. And it is here we begin to feel a sense of disappointment which, eventually, ends up in considerable disagreement, not so much with the opinions expressed as with the process by which they are reached. Indeed, 'obfuscation, rather than enlightenment' to use the phrase he applies to some contemporary writers is, on reflection, not inappropriate to many of his own pronouncements.

A passing reference to R. G. Collingwood led us to look him up with this result.

'There is plenty to say about Art if one bases it only on the acknowledged classics . . . the aesthetician who claims to know what it is that makes Shakespeare a poet is tacitly claiming to know whether Miss Stein is a poet, and if not, why not.'

Now we find that Professor Bodkin condemns certain unspecified modern artists since they were 'bad as men, because they had no sense of reverence nor respect for authority. Debauched, drunken, drugged, depraved creatures throng the ranks of modern painters'. In support of this he quotes, 'Artist Quarter'—a trivial piece of gossip-writing, which contains at least one libel against a distinguished American Collector.

To Collingwood again for a rejoinder to the fallacy of this approach to painting—

'It would be tedious to enumerate the tangles of misunderstanding which this nonsense about self-expression has generated. To take one such only: it has set us off looking for "the man Shakespeare" in his poems, and trying to

## A Review of Two Books

reconstruct his life and opinions from them, as if that were possible, as if, were it possible, it would help us to appreciate his work. It has degraded criticism to the level of personal gossip and confused art with exhibitionism.'

Mr. Booth Tarkington introduces the author of the second book under review. And, very properly, he stresses the value of not accepting advice on how to look at pictures until we are satisfied on the fitness of the adviser. What a man says may or may not be important; who and what he is are of great importance. Concerning Professor Venturi's qualifications there can be little doubt. His academic career in innumerable posts in Italy and America is truly phenomenal and his writings reveal scholarship of a very high order.

The 'prime standard of judgement' according to the Professor is the personality of the artist, and he goes on to say—

'This does not mean that it ignores any objective standard. The personality of the artist is objective if we know how to interpret and understand him, if we penetrate into his state of mind, follow his process of creation, the struggle of his imagination with his ideas, his moral sense, and his technique in order to reach his unity of form and content.'

At first glance it looks as if we were up against the same error which runs through Professor Bodkin's book. But Professor Venturi recognises the danger and seeks to avoid it, with varying degrees of success. His book demands and merits careful reading, and that more than once. It presupposes some knowledge of painting and of the history of art criticism. Nevertheless it gets much nearer the answer to the question most often in the minds of 'beginners' in art appreciation.

To the weary platitude, 'We have hundreds of good painters but very few artists' there is always hurled the question, 'What is the difference?' It isn't so difficult to put the answer into words. The artist is one who allows his imagination to operate above and beyond his technical talent, the so-called fundamental rules of tradition, and any limiting ethical, moral or political ideology. If he is not thus free he is only a craftsman, a theorist or a propagandist.

Is the answer right or wrong? Does it matter? How, where and when are we able to mark the distinction? Obviously first-hand experience, complemented by some guide, if and when available, is essential. We may not be bored in Professor Bodkin's company, but we shall get further along the road with Professor Venturi.

'The Approach to Painting' by Thomas Bodkin (Collins, 8/6).

'Painting and Painters' (How to Look at a Picture—Giotto to Chagall) by Lionello Venturi (Charles Scribner's Sons Ltd., 21/-).

## MISCELLANY

### NOTES ON TWO PAINTINGS

(See page 23)

#### "PORTRAIT OF PROVOST MURDOCH," BY DAVID MARTIN

GEORGE MURDOCH matriculated at Glasgow College in 1727. As Bailie Murdoch he was an active member of the Town Council during the anxious times of the '45 Rebellion. In August of that year, the troops quartered in the City were called away, and Glasgow was left to the mercy of Prince Charles Edward Stuart's Army. The appeals by Provost Cochrane to the Government for arms were unheeded and the retreating Highland Army entered the unprotected city on Christmas Day, 1745.

The occupation has been described by Dougal Graham, Bellman of the City, and our first 'war correspondent':

'Eight days they did in Glasgow rest,  
Till they were all cloth'd and drest,  
Ten thousand sterling made it pay,  
For being of the Georgian way.'

The 'cloth'd and drest' refers to the Highlanders' demand for 6,000 cloth coats, 12,000 linen shirts, 6,000 pairs of shoes and 'as many pairs of tartan hose and blue bonnets'.

The sequel to the 'occupation' took place in December, 1748, when Provost Cochrane and Bailie Murdoch set out for London to persuade the Government to pay the city compensation. The journey by post-chaise, which broke down on the way, took twelve days. In London they were kept waiting for five months, and in letters to his wife, Provost Cochrane bitterly complains of 'losing my time, spending the toun's money, and vexing and fatiguing myself, and all to no purpose'. However they were successful in inducing the Government to pay Glasgow £10,000.

During George Murdoch's term as Provost, the first City Chamberlain was appointed, and by 1767 he was able to record that the City's annual income now balanced the annual expenditure.

There is an interesting side-light on George Murdoch's character. When asked to lay the foundation stone of the new bridge at Jamaica Street he took it on himself to form a Grand Lodge of Freemasons so that, as Grand Master, he might enhance the occasion. For this he was censured by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and the Glasgow Grand Lodge disappeared.

#### "CLEMENTINA SOBIESKI," BY NICOLAS DE LARGILLIÈRE

In 1718 James Francis Edward Stuart became affianced to Maria Clementina Sobieski, grand-daughter of the warrior king of Poland, John Sobieski. The marriage was forbidden by the emperor, who kept the princess and her mother in honourable confinement at Innsbruck. Clementina was abducted by a zealous Jacobite, Charles Wogan, reached Italy in safety, and married James at Montefiascone on September 1st, 1719. James and Clementina were now invited to reside in Rome at the special request of Pope Clement XI, who openly acknowledged their titles of British King and Queen, gave them a papal guard of troops, presented them with the Palazzo Muti, and made them an annual allowance of 12,000 crowns. At the Palazzo Muti, the chief centre of Jacobite activity, were born James's two sons, Charles Edward (The Young Pretender) and Henry Benedict Stuart. James's married life proved turbulent and unhappy owing to the hot temper and jealous nature of Clementina, who soon after Henry's birth in 1725 left her husband and spent over two years in a Roman convent. At length a reconciliation was effected, but Clementina died in February, 1735.

## THE BURRELL COLLECTION

The exhibition of a selection of the Burrell Collection will be shown till the end of August. It will be some time before the suitable setting for these Art Treasures is available, but we are fortunate in being able to present a selection, which will give some idea of the range and quality of a very notable acquisition. The complete collection comprises approximately 4,600 items and the donors, Sir William and Lady Burrell, have made several additions in recent months.

Among the pictures are such masterpieces as 'The Judgment of Paris' by Veneziano; 'Stag Hunt' by Lucas Cranach; 'Madonna and Child' by Giovanni Bellini; 'House of Zola' by Cézanne; 'The Miller, his Son and the Ass' by Daumier; 'Head of a Girl' by Renoir; 'Le Clocher de Noisy-le-Roi' by Sisley and 'Au Café' by Manet. There are a unique number of pictures by Degas including 'Portrait of Durany'; 'Jockeys sous la Pluie'; 'La Répétition' and 'Foyer de la Danse de l'Opéra.' In addition one of the smaller rooms is devoted to the fine range of Crawfords which Sir William Burrell has collected over many years.

The Art Objects include Chinese Pottery, Porcelain and Bronzes—some of which were shown in the Exhibition of Chinese Art in London; Silver ranging from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries; English and Continental Wine-Glasses, Sculpture, etc.

The preparation of fully detailed and illustrated catalogues is in process, and the present exhibition is intended to serve only as a slight introduction, which will show more effectively than reports, the truly magnificent nature of this unique gift.

## THE GIORGIONE

Mr. E. Tietze Conrat has published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (Paris) an article on the Giorgione in the Corporation collection. With regard to its present title, *The Adulteress Brought Before Christ*, he claims,

'If he (Giorgione) had really meant to represent this subject, traditionally recognised in the painting in the Glasgow Museum, would Giorgione have made Jesus dash forward to stop the squad of myrmidons surrounding the sinner, thus making of the active intervention of the law the key-stone of the whole riotous composition? This seems very unlikely.'

Following some further observations, he concludes—'What is represented in this painting is not the "Adulteress before Christ" but "Susannah Before Daniel." This would make everything that seemed excessive appear quite natural. The officials escort the woman, followed by the two elders. The young lawyer stops them; his gesture is that of indignation against an evident "judicial murder"; hence no Temple and no Apostles: hence above all, no Jesus. If the halo—which incidentally is given to Daniel in an almost contemporaneous painting by Raffaelino dei Carli (1470-1526) in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore—could deceive art critics the coquettish sandal ought to have carried witness against the identification.'

## THE CRITIC

The etching by James McBey reproduced on page 22 is noteworthy for a special reason. The 'critic' is Duncan Macdonald, of the Lefèvre Gallery, London, internationally known as an art dealer. He began his career in Glasgow.

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# PICASSO and all that...

I THINK it's a sound idea to go to the Picasso exhibition at Kelvingrove with this in your mind—that because you can't understand a painting it isn't necessarily bad, nor, by the same token, is it necessarily good.

Picasso has perverted disciples who contend that because he is a great artist every picture he paints is inevitably a work of art—but that's a theory to which I'm unable to subscribe.

Picasso—although he has grandiloquently said that he does not seek but finds—is enduring

an experimentalist and not all his experiments come off.

## His Challenge

In these paintings of the war period he seems to be attacking the existing conception of creative art, to be challenging the illusion of space."

As he has done before, he decides he's off tangent—but something

When scoff "advn"

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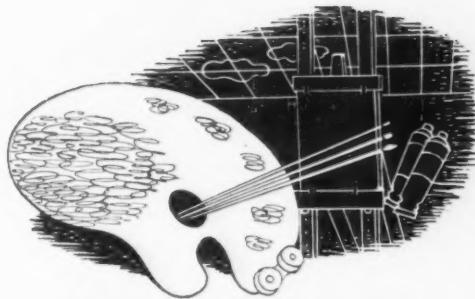


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